

CLAIMS:

1. A method of providing conditional access to a data content item (304) for a number of users (302), where the data content item (304) is associated with a digital right (303), the digital right (303) providing any user (301) of a group of users (302) the right to access the data content item (304) a predetermined number of times, and where the data content item (304) is arranged in a number of subparts (310) and the digital right (303) is arranged in a number of sub-rights (100), initially designated as available sub-rights (101), each available sub-right (101) providing any user (301) of the group of users (302) the right to access a subpart (310) of the data content item (304), and wherein the method comprises the steps of:
- 5 - granting a user (301) of the group of users (302) access to the data content item (304) if the associated digital right (303) or the available sub-right(s) (101) allows this, and
- 10 - reserving a number of available sub-rights (101), resulting in a number of reserved sub-rights (102), when a user (301) of the group of users (302) initiates granted access to the data content item (304) as a new access session.
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2. A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the step of reserving a number of available sub-rights (101) comprises reservation of a number of sub-rights (101) that is required to access the complete content item once if there are sufficiently many available sub-rights (101).
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3. A method according to claims 1 – 2, characterized in that the method further comprises
- consuming one available sub-right (101) or a reserved sub-right (102) when a sub-part (310) is accessed by a user (301) of the group of users (302) resulting in a spent sub-right (103) that
- 25 no longer is available.
4. A method according to claims 1 – 3, characterized in that a specific available sub-right (101) only allows access to a specific sub-part (310) of the data content item (304),

or that a specific available sub-right (101) allows access to any sub-part (310) of the data content item (304).

5 5. A method according to claims 1 - 4, characterized in that the step of reserving
a number of available sub-rights (101) comprises
- reserving the number of sub-rights (101) so that only the user that initiated granted access to
the data content item (304) is able to continue access to the data content item (304) using
reserved sub-rights (102), or
reserving the number of sub-rights (101) so that all the users belonging to the group
10 comprising the user that initiated granted access to the data content item (304) is able to
continue access to the data content item (304) using reserved sub-rights (102).

6. A method according to claims 1 - 5, characterized in that the step of reserving
a number of available sub-rights (101) is only done when the user (301) that initiated granted
15 access is expected to complete access to substantially all of the data content item (304).

7. A method according to claims 1 - 6, characterized in that the method further
comprises the step of
canceling, by a user, the reservation of a number of reserved sub-rights (102) thereby freeing
20 sub-rights (100) resulting a number of available sub-rights (101) for the group of users (302),
where only the user that initiated granted access to the content item (304) is allowed to cancel
or where all the users belonging to the group comprising the user that initiated granted access
to the data content item (304) is allowed to cancel.

25 8. A conditional access system (300) for providing conditional access to a data
content item (304) for a number of users (302), where the data content item (304) is
associated with a digital right (303), the digital right (303) providing any user (301) of a
group of users (302) the right to access the data content item (304) a predetermined number
of times, and where the data content item (304) is arranged in a number of subparts (310) and
30 the digital right (303) is arranged in a number of sub-rights (100), initially designated as
available sub-rights (101), each available sub-right (101) providing any user (301) of the
group of users (302) the right to access a subpart (310) of the data content item (304), and
wherein the system comprises:
- means (311) for granting a user (301) of the group of users (302) access to the data content

item (304) if the associated digital right (303) or the available sub-right(s) (101) allows this, and

- means (311) for reserving a number of available sub-rights (101), resulting in a number of reserved sub-rights (102), when a user (301) of the group of users (302) initiates granted
5 access to the data content item (304) as a new access session.

9. A system according to claim 8, characterized in that the means (311) for reserving a number of available sub-rights (101) is adapted to reserve of a number of sub-rights (101) that is required to access the complete content item once if there are sufficiently
10 many available sub-rights (101).

10. A system according to claims 8 – 9, characterized in that the system further comprises
- means (311) for consuming one available sub-right (101) or a reserved sub-right (102) when
15 a sub-part (310) is accessed by a user (301) of the group of users (302) resulting in a spent sub-right (103) that no longer is available.

11. A system according to claims 8 – 10, characterized in that a specific available sub-right (101) only allows access to a specific sub-part (310) of the data content item (304),
20 or that a specific available sub-right (101) allows access to any sub-part (310) of the data content item (304).

12. A system according to claims 8 - 11, characterized in that the means (311) for reserving a number of available sub-rights (101) is adapted to
25 - reserve the number of sub-rights (101) so that only the user that initiated granted access to the data content item (304) is able to continue access to the data content item (304) using reserved sub-rights (102), or
- reserve the number of sub-rights (101) so that all the users belonging to the group comprising the user that initiated granted access to the data content item (304) is able to
30 continue access to the data content item (304) using reserved sub-rights (102).

13. A system according to claims 8 - 12, characterized in that reserving a number of available sub-rights (101) is only done when the user (301) that initiated granted access is expected to complete access to substantially all of the data content item (304).

14. A system according to claims 8 – 13, characterized in that the system further comprises

- means (311) for canceling, by a user, the reservation of a number of reserved sub-rights (102) thereby freeing sub-rights (100) resulting a number of available sub-rights (101) for the group of users (302), where only the user that initiated granted access to the content item (304) is allowed to cancel or where all the users belonging to the group comprising the user that initiated granted access to the data content item (304) is allowed to cancel.

10 15. A computer readable medium having stored thereon instructions for causing one or more processing units to execute the method according to any one of claims 1 – 7.